

Drought Legislative Update

May 18, 2021

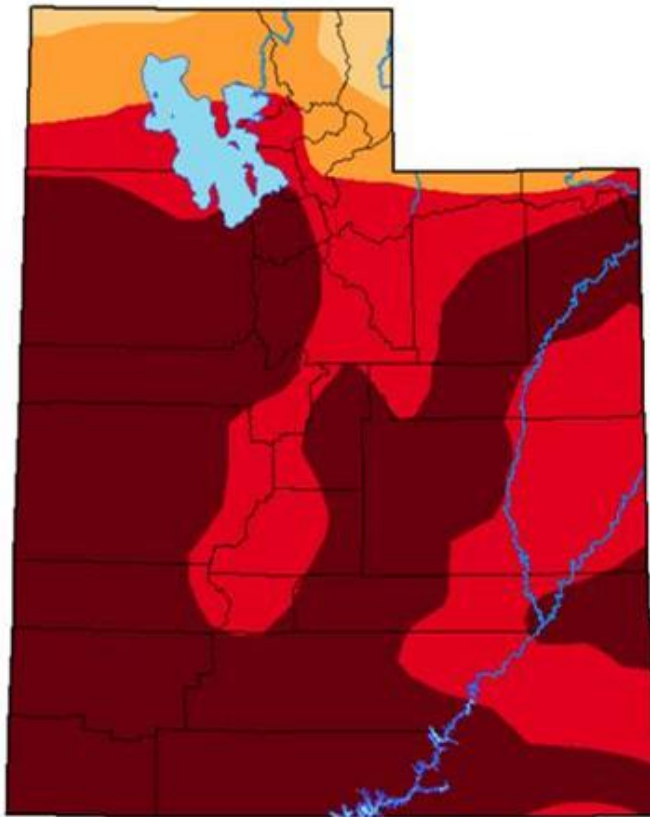
Brian Steed
Executive Director

Utah Department of Natural Resources



100% of the state is in drought

U.S. Drought Monitor Utah



May 11, 2021

(Released Thursday, May. 13, 2021)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

| | None | D0-D4 | D1-D4 | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4 |
|---|------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Current | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 98.19 | 90.20 | 58.83 |
| Last Week 05-04-2021 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 98.19 | 90.20 | 57.21 |
| 3 Months Ago 02-09-2021 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 98.13 | 90.24 | 69.68 |
| Start of Calendar Year 12-29-2020 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 97.38 | 90.11 | 68.56 |
| Start of Water Year 09-29-2020 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 99.62 | 93.20 | 87.26 | 12.80 |
| One Year Ago 05-12-2020 | 9.45 | 90.55 | 60.66 | 4.61 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

Intensity:

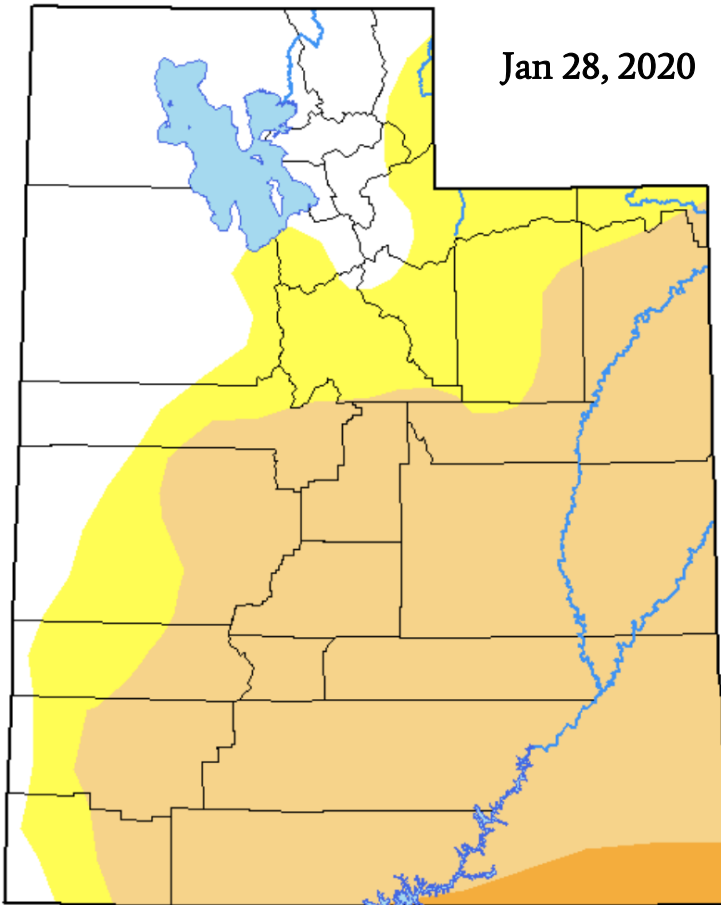
| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| None | D2 Severe Drought |
| D0 Abnormally Dry | D3 Extreme Drought |
| D1 Moderate Drought | D4 Exceptional Drought |

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

2020 compared to 2021

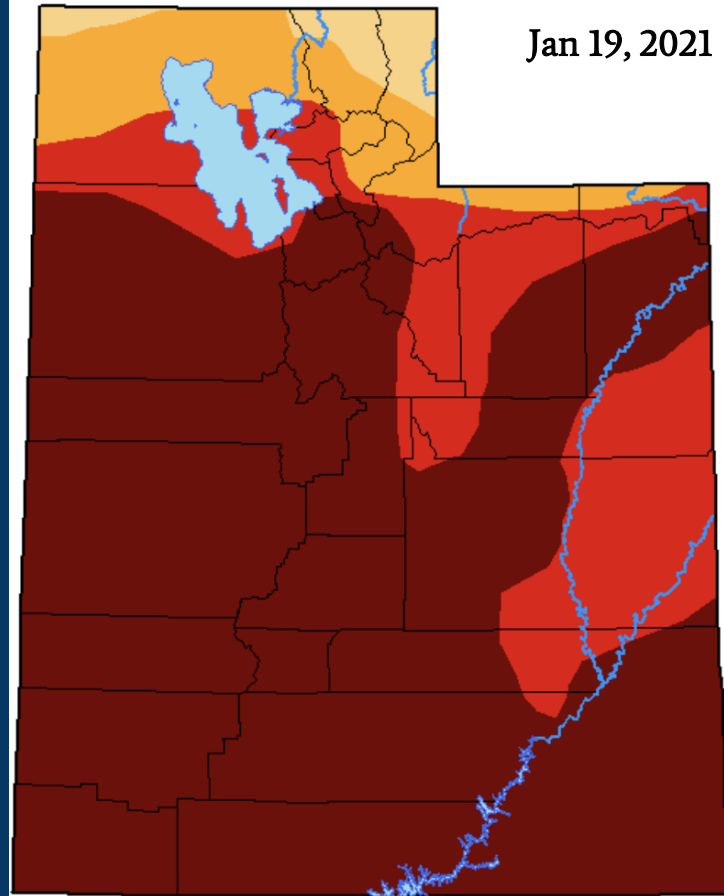
U.S. Drought Monitor **Utah**

Jan 28, 2020



U.S. Drought Monitor **Utah**

Jan 19, 2021



Conditions during past declarations

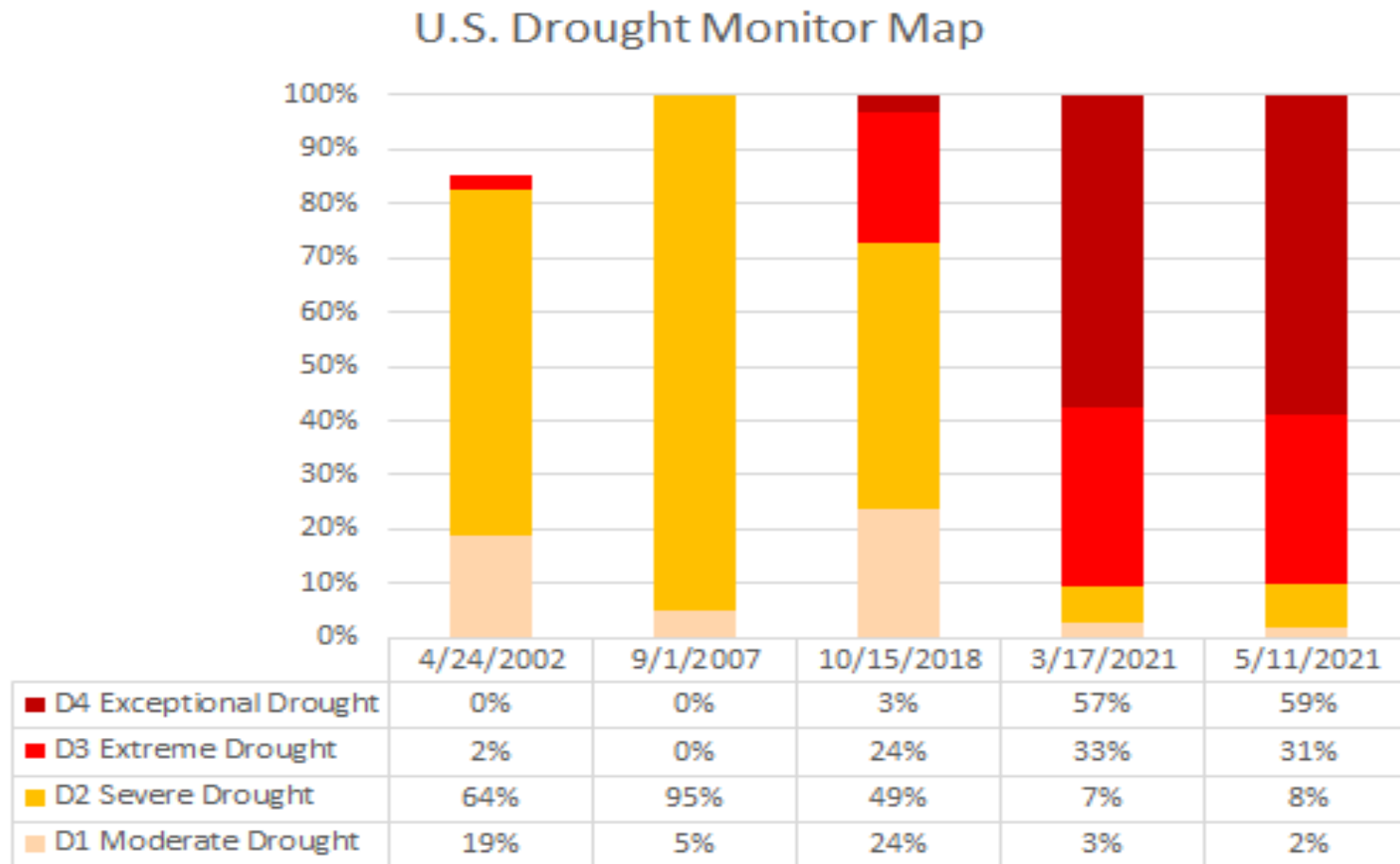


Chart reflects the percentage of different drought categories per the U.S. Drought Monitor Map when drought declarations have been issued. Conditions have not improved since Gov. Cox issued the drought declaration March 17, 2021.

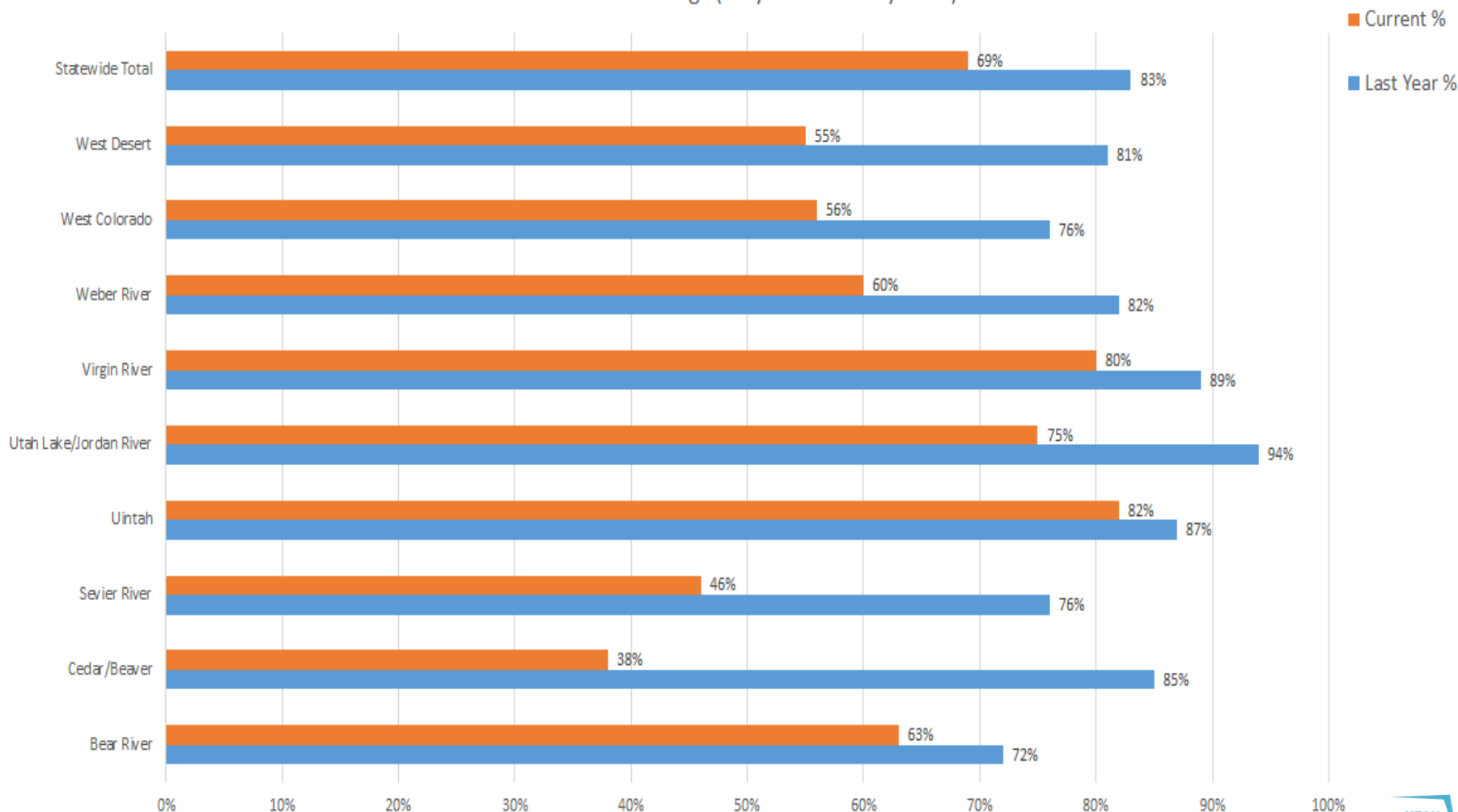
Conditions are very dry

- Soil moisture reached a record low
- Wildfire danger is high
- Reservoirs are lower than last year and not expected to fill to average levels



Reservoir Levels

Reservoir Storage (May 2021 vs. May 2020)



How long will drought last?

- We don't know how long this extreme drought will last
- Plan for the worst and hope for the best



Low water levels at Rockport Reservoir

Drought Declaration

- Our Current State Drought Response Plan requires a declaration of emergency if conditions warrant it.
 - Drought declaration activates the Drought Response Committee
 - Consists of representatives of Department of Emergency Management, USGS, Utah Divisions of Water Rights and Water Resources, Department of Agriculture and Food, Department of Environmental Quality, Governor's economic advisors, and others
- Tasked with monitoring conditions and recommending actions to policy makers
 - The DRC has been meeting since March to assess current needs. The DRC recommended to the Governor to take additional actions on state properties.
 - Raised awareness of extreme conditions
 - Encouraged water conservation statewide

What emergency powers are activated?

- Division of Emergency Management coordinates the activation and allocation of state and federal resources
- State funds may be used to transport or treat water or to increase the supply where needed
- State Engineer can prioritize water for drinking, sanitation, or fire suppression in the event of a temporary water shortage



Low water levels at East Canyon



Questions?

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